

Claims:

1. A casing hanger support assembly for supporting an inner casing string within a well containing an outer casing string, comprising:

5 a casing hanger support housing positioned along the outer casing string for supporting a casing hanger and the inner casing string in the well;

the casing hanger secured to an upper end of the inner casing string for mating engagement with the casing hanger support housing; and

10 one of a rupture disk and a blowout plug in a wall of the casing hanger support housing for maintaining a desired pressure differential between an interior and an exterior of the outer casing string.

2. A casing hanger support assembly as defined in Claim 1, wherein the casing hanger includes a seal assembly for sealing with the casing hanger support housing and one or more lockdown members for fitting within a lockdown groove in an interior surface of the casing hanger support housing.

3. A casing hanger support assembly as defined in Claim 1, wherein the rupture disk includes one of ceramic disk and a metallic disk.

4. A casing hanger support assembly as defined in Claim 1, wherein the blowout plug includes a shear member to release the blowout plug in response to a predetermined pressure differential.

5. A casing hanger support assembly as defined in Claim 1, wherein the inner casing string receives a tubing string suspended in the well.

6. A casing hanger support assembly for supporting an inner casing string within a well containing an outer casing string and a production tubing string within the inner casing string for recovering production fluids, the casing hanger support assembly

comprising:

a casing hanger support housing along the outer casing string for supporting a casing hanger and the inner casing string in the well;

the casing hanger secured to an upper end of the inner casing string for mating engagement with the casing hanger support housing; and

one of a rupture disk and a blowout plug in a wall of the casing hanger support housing for maintaining a desired pressure differential between a space within the outer casing string and a space exterior of the outer casing string.

7. A casing hanger support assembly as defined in Claim 6, wherein the casing hanger includes a seal assembly for sealing with the casing hanger support housing.

8. A casing housing support assembly as defined in Claim 6, wherein the casing hanger includes one or more lockdown members for fitting within a lockdown groove in an interior surface of the casing hanger support housing.

9. A casing hanger support assembly as defined in Claim 6, wherein the rupture disk includes one of ceramic disk and a metallic disk.

10. A casing hanger support assembly as defined in Claim 6, wherein the blowout plug includes a shear member to release the blowout plug in response to a predetermined pressure differential.

11. A method of preventing rupture or collapse of a casing string in a well, comprising:

providing a casing hanger support housing along an outer casing string for supporting an inner casing string and a casing hanger in the well;

securing the casing hanger to an upper end of the inner casing string and axially connecting the casing hanger with the casing hanger support housing; and

providing one of a rupture disk and a blowup plug in a wall of the casing hanger support housing to maintain a desired pressure differential between a space within the outer casing string and a space exterior of the outer casing string.

5 12. A method as defined in Claim 11, further comprising:
 providing a seal assembly for sealing between the casing hanger and the casing hanger support housing.

10 13. A method as defined in Claim 11, further comprising:
 providing one or more lockdown members for fitting within a lockdown groove in an interior surface of the casing hanger support housing.

15 14. A method as defined in Claim 11, further comprising:
 recovering production fluids from the well through a production tubing string interior of the inner casing string.

20 15. A method as defined in Claim 11, further comprising:
 filling an annulus between the outer casing string and the inner casing string with a cement material; and
 positioning one of the rupture disks and the blowout plug above an upper end of the cement material.